

And of hir look in him ther gan to quiken
So greet desir, and swich affeccoun,
That in his hertes botme gan to stiken
Of hir his fixe and depe impressioun:
And though he erst hadde poured up and down,
He was tho glad his hornes in to shrinke;
Unnethe wiste he how to loke or winke.

Lo, he that leet himselfen so konninge,
And scorned hem that loves peynes dryen,
Was ful unwar that love hadde his dwellinge
Withinne the subtil streames of hir yen;
That sodeynly him thoughte he felte dyen,
Right with hir look, the spirit in his herte;
Blessed be love, that thus can folk converte!

She, this in blak, lykinge to Troilus,
Over alle thing he hoodly for to biholde;
Ne his desir, ne wherfor he stood thus,
He neither chere made, ne worde tolde;
But from afer, his maner for to holde,
On other thing his look somtyme he caste,
And eft on hir, whyl that servyse laste.

And after this, not fullliche al awbaped,
Out of the temple al esiliche he wente,
Repenting him that he hadde ever yjaped
Of loves folk, lest fully the descende
Of scorn fille on himself; but, what he mente,
Lest it were wist on any maner syde,
His wo he gan dissimulen and hyde.

Whan he was fro the temple thus departed,
He streyght anon unto his paleys torneth,
Right with hir look thurgh/shoten and thurgh-
darted,
Al feyneth he in lust that he sojorneth;
And al his chere and speche also he borneth;
And ay, of loves servants every while,
Himself to wrye, at hem he gan to smyle.

And seyde: Lord, so ye live al in lest,
Ye lovers! for the conningest of yow,
That serveth most ententiflich and best,
Him tit as often harm therof as prow;
Your hyre is quit ayein, ye, God wot how!
Nought wel for wel, but scorn for good servyse;
In feith, your ordre is ruled in good wyse!

In noun/certein ben alle your observaunces,
But it a sely fewe poyntes be;
Ne nothing asketh so grete attendaunces
As doth your lay, and that knowe alle ye;
But that is not the worste, as mote I thee;
But, tolde I yow the worste poynt, I leve,
Al seyde I sooth, ye wolden at me greve!

But tak this, that ye lovers ofte eschuwe,
Or elles doon of good entencioun,
ful ofte thy lady wole it misconstrue,
And deme it harm in hir opinioun;
And yet if she, for other enchesoun,
Be wrooth, than shalt thou han a groyn anon:
Lord! wel is him that may be of yow oon!

But for al this, whan that he say his tyme,
He held his pees, non other bote him gayned;
for love bigan his fetheres so to lyme,
That wel unnethe unto his folk he feyned
That othere besye nedes him destrayned;
for wo was him, that what to doon he niste,
But bad his folk to goon wher that hem liste.

And whan that he in chaumbre was alone,
He down upon his beddes feet him sette,
And first he gan to syke, and eft to grone,
And thoughte ay on hir so, withouten lette,
That, as he sat and wook, his spirit mette
That he hir saw a temple, and al the wyse
Right of hir loke, and gan it newe avyse.

Thus gan he make a mirour of his minde,
In which he saugh al hoodly hir figure;
And that he wel coude in his herte finde,
It was to him a right good aventure
To love swich oon, and if he dide his cure
To serven hir, yet mighte he falle in grace,
Or elles, for oon of hir servaunts pace.

Imaginge that travail nor grame
Ne mighte, for so goodly oon, be lorn
As she, ne him for his desir ne shame,
Al were it wist, but in prys and upborn
Of alle lovers wel more than biforn;
Thus argued he in his ginninge,
ful unavysed of his wo cominge.

Thus took he purpos loves craft to suwe,
And thoughte he wolde werken prively,
first, to hyden his desir in muwe
from every wight yborn, al/outrely,
But he mighte ought recovered be therby;
Remembering him, that love to wyde yblowe
Yelt bittre fruyt, though swete seed be sowe.

And over al this, yet muchel more he thoughte
What for to speke, and what to holden inne,
And what to arten hir to love he soughte,
And on a song anon/right to biginne,
And gan loude on his sorwe for to winne;
for with good hope he gan fully assente
Criseyde for to love, and nought repente.

And of his song nought only the sentence,
As writ myn autour called Lollius,
But pleyntly, save our tonges difference,
I dar wel sayn, in al that Troilus
seyde in his song; lo! every word right thus
As I shal seyn; and whoso list it here,
Lo! next this vers, he may it finden here.

Cantus Troili.

If no love is, O God, what fele I so?
And if love is, what thing and whiche
is he?
If love be good, from whennes comth
my wo?
If it be wikke, a wonder thinketh me,
Whenne every torment and adversitee

That cometh of him, may to me savory thinke;
for ay thurst I, the more that I it drinke.

And if that at myn owene lust I brenne,
fro whennes cometh my wailing and my pleynte?
If harme agree me, wherto pleyne I thenne?
I noot, ne why unwery that I feynthe.
O quike deeth, o swete harm so queynthe,
How may of thee in me swich quantitee,
But if that I consente that it be?

And if that I consente, I wrongfully
Compleyne, ywis; thus possed to and fro,
Alstereles withinne a boot am I,
Amid the see, bytwixen windes two,
That in contrarie stonden evermo.
Alas! what is this wonder maladye?
for hete of cold, for cold of hete, I dye.

And to the god of love thus seyde he
With pitous voys: O lord, now youre is
My spirit, which that oughte youre be.
Yow thanke I, lord, that han me brought to this;
But whether goddesse or womman, ywis,
She be, I noot, which that ye do me serve;
But as hir man I wole ay live and sterve.

Ye stonden in hire eyen mightily,
As in a place unto your vertu digne;
Wherfore, lord, if my servyse or I
May lyke yow, so beth to me benigne;
for myn estat royal here I resigne
Into hir hond, and with ful humble chere
Bicome hir man, as to my lady dere.

In him ne deynd sparen blood royal
The fyr of love, wherfro God me blesse,
Ne him forbar in no degree, for al
his vertu or his excellent prowessse;
But held him as his thral lowe in distresse,
And brende him so in sondry wyse ay newe,
That sixty tyme a day he loste his hewe.

So muche, day by day, his owene thought,
for lust to hir, gan quiken and encrese,
That every other charge he sette at nought;
forthy ful ofte, his hote fyr to cese,
To seen hir goodly look he gan to prese;
for therby to ben esed wel he wende,
And ay the ner he was, the more he brende.

for ay the ner the fyr, the hotter is,
This, trowe I, knoweth al this compaignie.
But were he fer or neer, I dar seye this,
By night or day, for wysdom or folye,
his herte, which that is his brestes ye,
Was ay on hir, that fairer was to sene
Than ever was Eleyne or Polixene.

Eek of the day ther passed nought an houre
That to himself a thousand tyme he seyde:
Good goodly, to whom serve I and laboure,
As I best can, now wolde God, Criseyde,

Ye wolden on me rewe er that I deyde!
My dere herte, alas! myn hele and hewe
And lyf is lost, but ye wole on me rewe.

Alle othere dredes weren from him fledde,
Bothe of the assege and his savacioun;
Ne in him desyr noon othere fownes bredde
But arguments to this conclusioun,
That she on him wolde han compassioun,
And he to be hir man, whyl he may dure;
Lo, here his lyf, and from the deeth his cure!

The sharpe shoures felle of armes preve,
That Ector or his othere bretheren diden,
Ne made him only therfore ones meve;
And yet was he, wherso men wente or riden,
founde oon the best, and lengest tyme abiden
Ther peril was, and dide eek such travayle
In armes, that to thenke it was mervayle.

But for non hate he to the Grekes hadde,
Ne also for the rescous of the toun,
Ne made him thus in armes for to madde,
But only, lo, for this conclusioun,
To lyken hir the bet for his renoun;
fro day to day in armes so he spedde,
That alle the Grekes as the deeth him dredde.

And fro this forth tho refte him love his sleep,
And made his mete his foo; and eek his sorwe
Gan multiplie, that, whoso toke keep,
It shewed in his hewe, bothe eve and morwe;
Therfor a tittle he gan him for to borwe
Of other syknesse, lest of him men wende
That the hote fyr of love him brende.

And seyde, he hadde a fever and ferde amis;
But how it was, certayn, can I not seye,
If that his lady understood not this,
Or feyned hir she niste, oon of the tweye;
But wel I rede that, by no maner weye,
Ne semed it as that she of him roughte,
Nor of his peyne, or whatsoever he thoughte.

But than fel to this Troilus such wo,
That he was wel neigh wood; for ay his drede
Was this, that she som wight had loved so,
That never of him she wolde have taken hede;
for whiche him thoughte he felte his herte blede.
Ne of his wo ne dorste he not biginne
To tellen it, for al this world to winne.

But whanne he hadde a space fro his care,
Thus to himself ful ofte he gan to pleyne;
He sayde: O fool, now art thou in the snare,
That whilom japedest at loves peyne;
Now artow hent, now gnaw thyn owene cheyne;
Thou were ay wont eche lovere reprehende
Of thing fro which thou canst thee nat defende.

What wole now every lover seyn of thee,
If this be wist, but ever in thyn absence
Laughen in scorn, and seyn: Lo, ther gooth he,